



CITY OF DURHAM
Office of Public Affairs
101 CITY HALL PLAZA
DURHAM, NC 27701



News Media Contact:

Kimberle W. Walker
Senior Public Affairs Specialist
(919) 560-4322 x 29194
(919) 943-3649 (cell)
Kimberle.Walker@DurhamNC.gov
<http://DurhamPolice.com>
<http://Facebook.com/DurhamPoliceDepartment>
<https://twitter.com/DurhamPoliceNC>

News Release

For Immediate Release: April 8, 2016

National Crime Victims' Rights Week April 10-16

Victim Services Unit to Honor Families, Heighten Awareness

The Victim Services Unit of the Durham Police Department (DPD) is observing 2016 National Crime Victims' Rights Week with activities that support families and promote community awareness of victims' rights and the services the unit provides. This year's national theme - *Serving Victims, Building Trust, Restoring Hope* - highlights the importance of providing needed services at the earliest stage of victimization. Early intervention helps prevent both further victimization and involvement in the criminal justice system, thus addressing the cycle of violence and restoring hope for the future.

DPD's 2016 observance includes a Family Fun Day Kickoff at the Durham Bulls Athletic Park on Sunday, April 10. Participating families served by the Victim Services Unit will enjoy an afternoon of baseball, hot dogs and friendship with victim advocates and police staff. Each family will receive a fun package and family portrait to commemorate the outing. DPD Victim Advocates will support activities of the NC Victim Assistance Network (NCVAN) in Raleigh as well. Specific events include a [Remembrance Ceremony](#) on Tuesday, April 12, and the network's [Memorial Garden Ceremony](#) on Wednesday, April 13. DPD Victim Services will culminate its observance by holding an awareness campaign at the department's [2016 Neighborhood and Community Watch Workshop](#) on Saturday, April 16, from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at The Carolina Theatre, 309 W. Morgan Street. Literature about

victims' rights, services available to victims and observance giveaways will be provided to workshop participants including neighborhood watch block captains from across the city.

For more details call the DPD Victim Services Unit at (919) 560-4951.

About DPD's Victim Services Unit

Over the past 19 years the Durham Police Department has made significant strides in providing comprehensive services to crime victims. The origins of a Victim Services Unit in 1997 was a milestone in positioning the agency to

better implement, and advocate for, services that reinforce victims' rights. The unit has evolved to currently include a staff of five: a sergeant, corporal and three full-time victim advocates who provide a range of services including round the clock referrals; assistance in filing compensation documents; and language translation for Spanish-speaking victims and witnesses.

History of the National Observance

Since 1981, National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) has challenged the nation to extend its vision of crime victims' rights and services to reach every victim of crime. Each year, communities across the country celebrate decades of hard-earned progress in securing the rights, resources and protections that crime victims need to rebuild their lives.

In 1984, Congress passed the bipartisan Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), which created a national fund to ease victims' suffering. Financed not by taxpayers but by fines and penalties paid by offenders, the Crime Victims Fund supports victim services, such as rape crisis and domestic violence programs and victim compensation programs that pay many of victims' out-of-pocket expenses from the crime, such as counseling, funeral expenses, and lost wages.

Today, the nation has made dramatic progress in securing rights, protections, and services for victims. Every state has enacted victims' rights laws and all have victim compensation programs. More than 10,000 victim service agencies now help people throughout the country. Visit <http://victimsofcrime.org/> for more information.

###